

**Letter from Alexander Melville Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 3, 1876, with transcript**

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May 3, 76. (Enc. with letter of E.G.B.) My dear Al.,

Mamma being better, I forgot her having been unwell and neglected to inform you as I promised. I am glad you took no news as good news. If what you said was correct the interference was of no consequence to you, and you need not have worried yourself about it. I feel strongly as Mrs. Hubbard does in reference to your flightiness from theory to theory without working any of them to a practicable issue. I do not see however how you can devote your time to telegraphy and earn your living. In the meantime you must teach in order to live. You should therefore avoid dissipating your time over too extensive a field, bad policy even in a man of leisure, work steadily towards a single end until you attain it. The only hope so far as I can see, of immediate pecuniary benefit from your scientific work, is in the autograph! Make it produce an income and then you can ride the electric hobby. At present you have no stable for such a horse and you should deny yourself till you get one. The work which you have given up should never have been undertaken. Two thirds of all your work has generally been of this class. You should now rise above that weakness. The sum of all is, what I said to you in Boston, "stick to the Autograph". I am sending the papers as you direct. A parcel for you goes with this. What position was offered you in the Washington Institution? You spoke formerly of Principal; was it this?

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Hoping to hear of a great amendment in your undertaking, and in your health, and working hours, I am,

Your affectionate father, A. Melville Bell.